

March 3, 2006

E-News from the Hawaii Department of Agriculture

Aloha!

It is with pleasure that we bring you the March 2006 edition of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture e-newsletter.

The legislative session is fast approaching First Crossover on Thursday, March 9. The House version of the administration bill necessary for the program transfer of agricultural lands from DLNR to HDOA (HB2271) continues to make progress, and has passed through all four House committee referrals. The bill increasing the amount of our microloan program (SB2235) is also still advancing, having passed through both Senate committee referrals (see article below). There are also important bills alive on funding agricultural research and marketing, irrigation system repair and maintenance, addressing invasive species and agricultural property damage.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank those who provided testimony in opposition to measures which proposed to transfer various divisions from HDOA to either ADC or DBEDT. HDOA believes that having these programs that serve agriculture located in one department leverages the expertise within the department to cross-link with each other and allow for a concentrated focus on agriculture.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (808) 973-9550 should have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Sandra Lee Kunimoto
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

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AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

- As Del Monte announced closing of its operation in the Kunia area, the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) anticipates changes in water use pattern at the Waiahole Water System soon. ADC will be doing some necessary improvement work at and near Reservoir 225 to improve water delivery efficiency and to reduce system loss.
- Due to recent changes of land ownership and sublease arrangements in the Kunia area, ADC welcomes Pioneer Hi-Bred and Halm's Enterprise as new water users of the Waiahole Water System.
- ADC Board members Eric Weinert, Bobby Cooper, and Executive Director Alfredo Lee attended a public meeting sponsored by the Kau Soil and Water Conservation District in Pahala on February 16. Purpose of the meeting was to form a working group of farmers, ranchers, and landowners to work towards improving the dilapidated irrigation systems and ensuring the long-term availability of water for agriculture.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

HDOA's Agricultural Loan Division proposed legislation (HB 2272 and SB 2235) to increase the Chairperson's authority to approve loans from \$25,000 to \$75,000. Currently, loans above \$25,000 are approved by the Board of Agriculture. The Agricultural Loan Division's intent is to provide better service to the agricultural and aquacultural industries. Passage of these bills will reduce the approval times and streamline the loan application process for smaller loans. Also, in the event of emergency situations, such as damage from flooding, the division will be able to respond faster to assist those affected to re-establish

their operations. Unfortunately, the House did not approve the bill to move forward. The Senate Ways & Means Committee recommended approval of the companion bill but with an amendment to lower the loan amount from \$75,000 to \$50,000.

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KONA RISK ASSESSMENT

Teams of plant quarantine inspectors from Oahu, Maui and Hilo pulled special duty to assist Kona inspectors in a two-week risk assessment at Kona Airport that began on February 19. During the risk assessment, 100 percent of air cargo, maritime and freight forward shipments of plant material are inspected. The data collected will help the three Kona inspectors concentrate their inspection efforts on certain commodities and routes that are known to carry pests and diseases that are not established in Hawaii. This is the first time that a risk assessment is being conducted in Kona. Risk assessments have been conducted at Honolulu International Airport and Kahului Airport on Maui and are also planned for other airports in the state.

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HDOA HOSTS MEETING ON BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS ON MOLOKAI

HDOA State Veterinarian Dr. Jim Foppoli and six USDA APHIS veterinarians held a meeting in early February on Molokai to brief ranchers and hunters on bovine tuberculosis (BTB) findings over the past five years. About 40 people attended the meeting. Options for a management plan for East Molokai were discussed including whether to continue surveillance efforts in feral populations and whether to continue the current level of herd testing for the disease. A proposal is being prepared and the final draft will be discussed at another meeting on Molokai in about three months. For more information on BTB on Molokai, go to the news release at: <http://www.hawaiiag.org/hdoa/newsrelease/06-01.htm>

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AG PARKS & IRRIGATION PROJECTS

Upcountry Maui Watershed Project/Upper Kula Dual Pipeline

Governor Linda Lingle has released another \$210,000 for the design of Phase VI of the Upcountry Maui Watershed Project/Upper Kula Dual Pipeline. Earlier in 2005, the Governor released \$3 million for the project. Construction of Phase VI is slated to begin in Spring 2007 and will install approximately 7,800 feet of irrigation water pipelines on the upper slope of Kula.

When completed, the new pipeline will span about 10 miles, beginning from the Olinda Water Treatment Plant to Keokea and provide irrigation service to farmland covering about 475 acres. So far, approximately two miles of the pipeline have been completed. The estimated completion date for the entire system is 2011.

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HIGHLIGHTS IN COMBATING ESTABLISHED PESTS

(The following is a sampling of recent activities by the Plant Industry Division, Plant Pest Control Branch and Pesticides Branch)

Erythrina Gall Wasp

Exploratory entomologist Mohsen Ramadan just returned from a productive, two-month search for possible biocontrol agents to combat Erythrina gall wasp (EGW) in Africa. EGW is devastating the state's wiliwili trees by causing severe galling of the leaves. Mohsen's search area included vast areas of Tanzania, where he found several parasitoids that appear to attack EGW. Mohsen noted that erythrina trees in Tanzania do not exhibit the same degree of galling as Hawaii's erythrina trees, and upon initial examination, it appears that the type of EGW in Tanzania is similar to the one found in Hawaii. HDOA insectary staff have already begun to rear colonies in quarantine. Work continues in identification of the

parasitoids, which will set the groundwork for host specificity testing. Under the best case scenario, it may be a year or so before any parasitoids may be released.

Green Scale

HDOA Chairperson Sandra Lee Kunimoto notified EPA on January 31 that the use of imidacloprid (Provado) on Kauai Coffee was being authorized through a crisis exemption to combat green scale. Imidacloprid is a systemic insecticide that controls scale insects. HDOA filed an application for an emergency exemption in October 2005. Although EPA has not approved the request, discussions with EPA staff indicated that toxicological and residue data for imidacloprid on coffee were within acceptable risks and an action level could be established to enable the use to proceed. HDOA must file reports with EPA on this use of imidacloprid and monitor its use.

Highlights of Plant Pest Control Activities by Island

Big Island

- Plant Quarantine Branch held an informational meeting with Big Island nurseries regarding the proposed interisland inspection protocol to stop the spread of coqui frogs from infested areas to non-infested areas.
- Hilo staff continue to investigate barrier methods to keep coqui frogs out of nursery areas using screens and mesh. Staff also looked into a possible electronic barrier product. Other ongoing efforts include tests on different materials to see if frogs can cling to it.

Oahu

- HDOA Oahu Insectary staff reported that a follow-up visit of the infestations of the papaya mealybug at the BYU-Hawaii campus in Laie revealed that several natural enemies were associated with the target pest. Numerous larvae of a syrphid fly and a coccinellid beetle were found aggressively moving about the infested leaves and preying voraciously on the mealybugs. In addition, an adult wasp, determined to be a species of Encyrtidae, was found in a sample of the field collections. A sampling scheme will be worked out to quantify the level of suppression exerted by the natural enemies on the pest population.
- PPC staff also visited residences in Waiahole Valley and Kalihi Valley to re-treat false kava that resprouted. False kava sprouts readily from any remaining part of the plant.

Kauai

- Kauai staff surveyed Kokee area and did not find symptoms of ohia rust. However, staff collected Ohia rust on rose apple in Kalaheo, which was confirmed in Honolulu by the HDOA plant pathologist.
- The rust was first recorded on Kauai in November 2005.
- Kauai staff grubbed long thorn kiawe seedlings and saplings in the stretch of ditch from Kekaha to Waimea. Staff also worked in Hahaione and destroyed 56 seedlings and 2 medium-sized plants.
- Kauai staff sprayed remnants of *Salvinia molesta* in Kalihiwai stream.
- Oahu staff traveled to Kauai to conduct detection surveys for glassy-winged sharpshooter (GWSS), papaya mealybug (PM) and the red imported fire ant (RIFA). Inspection for GWSS and PM were conducted on host plants such as African tulip, shower tree, hibiscus, plumeria, and papaya on both

east and west sides of the island and did not discover any infestation of these insects. Spam-bait vial trapping in Hanalei and Kekaha also did not detect any RIFA infestations.

Maui

- Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC) indicates that BBTV is slowly spreading in Pukalani. MISC will concentrate efforts in the Pukalani core area and into Makawao. HDOA personnel will continue efforts in Lahaina, Kihei, Kula and elsewhere on Maui. Maui staff visited Kula and Lahaina banana farms to discuss herbicide labeling and proper control methods of BBTV control.

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PREVENTING NEW INTRODUCTIONS OF PESTS

Seed Lab

- The Plant Pest Control's Seed Lab examined three seed lots (40 lbs.) from Hong Kong under the Federal Seed Act. No seeds of concern were found and the lots were allowed to enter U.S. commerce. Five germination tests were conducted, all of which received above standard rates under the Hawaii Seed Rules.
- The Seed Lab also examined five seed lots, representing 62 lbs of seed, from Japan. One lot of garland chrysanthemum was found to be contaminated with barnyardgrass seeds, which is a quarantine item from Japan because it is a corn relative. Four germination tests were conducted, one of which had no germination standards and three met or exceeded standards.

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INTERCEPTIONS BY PLANT QUARANTINE INSPECTORS

(The following is a sampling of recent interceptions by Plant Quarantine Inspectors)

January 10 – Maui inspectors noticed a frog on the floor near two shipments of plants which were being inspected at Kahului Airport. One shipment of 17 boxes of liner plants originated in Puerto Rico and the other shipment of five boxes of tissue cultured ferns originated in Florida. Both shipments were ordered to the Mua Street office where they were reinspected on January 11. No other frogs were found. The frog was sent to Land Animal Specialist Keevin Minami and identified as a coqui frog.

January 11 – Oahu inspectors confiscated and destroyed two bunches of scotch broom cuttings destined for a Honolulu flower shop because scotch broom is on the state's noxious weed list. The scotch broom cuttings were included in a shipment of five cartons of cut flowers, which arrived via air cargo on Delta Airlines Flight 1579 from Los Angeles.

January 19 - six cartons of organic Equadoran pineapples for a supermarket chain were treated and destroyed due to restrictions in Chapter 4-70, Hawaii Administrative Rules. The pineapples were included in a shipment consisting of two air containers of produce, which arrived on Pacific Air from Los Angeles.

January 30 – While conducting inspections at UPS, Maui inspectors found a box of chocolate candies that were heavily infested with ants. The shipment was treated by freezing and released to the importer.

February 1 – One carton containing 19 pieces of live coral for a Maui resident was confiscated and destroyed in Honolulu. The shipment arrived via FedEx from Washington state.

February 1 – Twenty-five mixed bouquets infected with a rust fungus not known to occur in Hawaii were treated and destroyed by Oahu inspectors. The bouquets were included in 86 cartons of assorted

bouquets destined for a Honolulu big box store and arrived via air cargo on a Hawaiian Airlines flight from Los Angeles.

February 2 – Oahu inspectors treated and destroyed 11 cartons of green leaf lettuce consigned to a Kauai wholesaler due to infestation of *Nysius raphanus*, an insect not known to be established in Hawaii. The lettuce was included in an air container of mixed produce arriving from Los Angeles via Hawaiian Air.

PQ inspectors statewide report an increasing number of interceptions of strawberries infested with thrips not known to occur in Hawaii.

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OTHER INSPECTION, INVESTIGATION/ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

February marked the one-year anniversary from the date fireweed plants were found flowering at Castle Junction. Surveillance continues by Plant Pest Control Branch staff and staff from Hawaii Department of Transportation. The last fireweed plant that was found at that site was in November 2005.

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ANIMAL DISEASE SURVEILLANCE

(The following is a sampling of activities by the Animal Industry's Livestock Disease Control Branch)

- Two horses arrived in Honolulu without documentation of the required equine encephalomyelitis vaccination. The private veterinarian was contacted and confirmed that the horses had been vaccinated. A warning letter was issued to the veterinarian who issued the Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI).
- Animal Industry staff completed three herd tests on Molokai, which resulted in negative results for bovine tuberculosis.

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AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT

ADP Co-Authors Offshore Aquaculture Report

John Corbin, Manager of the Aquaculture Development Program (ADP), has been part of a multidisciplinary and multi-institutional national team of experts who have worked for two years on recommendations to implement governance changes critical to the development of sustainable marine aquaculture in federally-controlled ocean waters of the United States (generally 3-200 nautical miles offshore). The results of this study were recently published by the University of Delaware's Center for Marine Policy, entitled, "Recommendations for an Operational Framework for Offshore Aquaculture in U.S. Federal Waters". Funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the report has already influenced national aquaculture legislation submitted by the Bush Administration in 2005 to create a commercial development office and leasing program for Federal waters.

Sustainable offshore aquaculture has the potential to enhance the availability of food resources for the public and to rebuild fisheries stocks. The report is available through the University of Delaware via the project web page: <http://darc.cms.udel.edu/sgeez/sgeez2final.pdf>

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MARKETING & STATISTICS

(The following is a sampling of recent activities in the Agricultural Development Division)

HDOA'S Matching Marketing Funds Support HFMA at Fancy Food Show

HDOA funded the participation of the Hawaii Food Manufacturers Association (HFMA) at the January 2006 Fancy Food Show held in San Francisco, CA. The ten Hawaii exhibitors reported a 60 percent increase in visitors compared to the year before, and 231 attendees stopped by the HFMA booth to leave

contact information. These leads included retailers such as Whole Foods Market, distributors such as Gourmet Foods International, hotels, restaurants, and various food outlets big and small. The 2005 Fancy Food Show generated \$61 per HDOA dollar spent.

<http://www.specialtyfood.com/do/fancyFoodShow.com>

Market Development Branch Attends Natural Product Expo West

HDOA's Market Development Branch (MDB) will attend the Natural Products Expo West in Anaheim, California, March 24 -26, 2006. HDOA in conjunction with DBEDT will co-sponsor a booth for Hawaii vendors. The Natural Products Expos are rated as one of the top trade shows in the U.S. and for 25 years have been the leaders in the natural and organic products industry. Twelve Hawaii exhibitors will be going to this trade show to spotlight Hawaii goods. These companies include: **Alembic International, Big Island Processing, Deep Sea Water, Hawaii Taro Company, Hawaiian Natural Tea, Kamauoha Foundation (Farms), Kona Blue Water Farms, Kona Coffee Council, Koyo USA Corp./MaHaLo Deep Sea Water,**

Liko Lehua Products, Maui Excellent, Volcano Island Honey Company.

Link to the Expo website: www.expowest.com

HDOA's Agricultural Development Division partners with Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA) for USDA funds

HDOA's joint application with other western state Department of Agriculture have been approved by WUSATA and submitted to the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service for final consideration.

- *WUSATA-USDA Market Access Program entitled "Taiwan – Direct Marketing Segment Infrastructure and Sales Development Incorporating Scientific Sensory Evaluation" – Partnership with Oregon, \$83,000*
- *WUSATA-USDA Market Access Program entitled "Canada Market Entry Service" – Partnership with Colorado and Wyoming, \$80,000*
- *WUSATA-USDA Market Access Program entitled "Hortfloorexpo Tradeshow, Shanghai, 2007" – Partnership with Oregon and Washington, \$40,000*
- *WUSATA-USDA Market Access Program entitled "Beijing/Shanghai Nursery Display Garden Follow-up" – Partnership with Oregon and Washington, \$33,000*
- *WUSATA-USDA "Japan-Thematic Consumer Product Promotions" – Partnership with Oregon and Washington, \$50,000*

Link to the WUSATA website: www.wusata.org

HDOA and DBEDT will also co-sponsor "The Hawaii Experience" display during a trade mission to Fukuoka Japan in May 2006.

News from HAS

Improved weather conditions during the 2005 calendar year increased available forage for cattle and other grazing animals. The January 1, 2006, cattle and calf inventory numbers totaled 161,000 head, 6,000 above January 1, 2005, and 5,000 head more than January 1, 2004. Results were based on mail, telephone, and personal interviews of over 200 Hawaii cattle producers. Complete results all surveys conducted by the Hawaii Agricultural Statistics office may be found at:

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Hawaii/index.asp

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Beef cows - 87,400 head - up 6,100
- Milk cows - 4,600 head - down 1,100
- Heifers 500 pounds and over
 - Beef replacements - 15,000 head – unchanged
 - Milk replacements - 2,000 head – unchanged
 - Other heifers - 5,000 head – unchanged

- Steers - 7,000 head - unchanged
- Bulls - 5,000 head - unchanged
- Calves - 35,000 head - up 1,000

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FARMER ASSISTANCE

National Organic Certification Program

HDOA MDB has received its second funding increment from USDA for the National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program, which is in effect from October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2008. To date, reimbursement has been made to 51 organic producers/handlers for a total disbursement of \$15,961.36. Additional funding is still available under this program, and new applications are being processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

For applications or information, contact:

Barbara Schafer, Market Development Branch

Barbara.J.Schafer@hawaii.gov

PH: 973-9595 FAX: 973-9590

USDA Webpage: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/indexIE.htm>

CTAHR Incubator Program

The Agribusiness Incubator Program (AIP) at the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) would like to spread the word about their program that helps startup agribusinesses and existing agribusinesses seeking to expand. The AIP program works intensively with its clients and focuses on strengthening the business aspects of running a successful agribusiness. AIP not only provides information and guidance, they meet with clients to develop and successfully implement strategic business initiatives. AIP has helped many of Hawaii's successful, high-profile agribusinesses take their businesses to the next level. For more information on this program, go to: <http://aip.hawaii.edu> e-mail: agincubator@ctahr.hawaii.edu or call (808) 956-3530 (Honolulu).

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USDA GRANTS

Renewable Energy and Efficiency Grants and Loan Guarantees

USDA is accepting applications for loan guarantees and grants for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. The program was established to encourage agricultural producers and small rural businesses to create renewable and energy efficient systems. Grants have been awarded to fund a wide range of wind, solar, biomass, geothermal and conservation technologies.

Applications for grants must be completed and submitted to the USDA Rural Development state office postmarked no later than May 12, 2006. Guaranteed loans will be awarded on a continuous basis. Applications are due to the National Office for funding consideration by July 3, 2006. Any guaranteed loan funds not obligated by August 1, 2006, will be made available for competitive grants. For more information refer to the announcement in the February 13, 2006 Federal Register or contact the state Rural Development office in Hilo at (808) 933-8380 or e-mail: lorraine.shin@hi.usda.gov Information is also available on the web at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/farmbill/index.html>

EQIP Offers Funding for Pest Management

The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), is a "conservation program that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals." The Hawaii and American Samoa program provides incentive payments for pest management for at-risk species: coqui frogs, nettle caterpillar, and little fire ant. Control of noxious weeds

has also been identified as a natural resource concern, and land owners or managers can receive \$500 per acre reimbursements for pest management.

Eligibility is limited to persons who engage in livestock or agricultural production. The eligible land is land that is used to produce agricultural commodities or livestock for food or fiber, i.e. pastureland, cropland, rangeland, private, non-industrial forestland, and other farm or ranch lands.

Applications for 2006 are being taken continuously with a current **deadline in late March 2006**.

More information can be found on the NRCS website:

http://www.hi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip_and_gswc.html

Hawaii and American Samoa EQIP Contact:

Kent Matsutani

Phone: (808) 541-2600 extension 149

Email: kent.matsutani@hi.usda.gov

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HDOA ANNUAL REPORT FOR FY2005 AVAILABLE

The department's annual report for FY2005 is now available. If you would like to receive a hard copy of the report, please e-mail: hdoa.info@hawaii.gov or call (808) 973-9560. The report is also available on the department website at: <http://www.hawaiiag.org/hdoa/leg2006.htm>

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To visit the HDOA website: click here: <http://www.hawaiiag.org/hdoa/>

For more information, please call (808) 973-9560 or e-mail: hdoa.info@hawaii.gov